

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 ACDA-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00 DOTE-00

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NSC-05 NSF-01 OIC-02 PA-01 PM-03 PRS-01 SAJ-01 OES-03

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CCMS, SENV

SUBJECT: CCMS: EGYPTIAN PARTICIPATION IN EMERGENCY
MEDICAL SERVICES CONFERENCE

REF: STATE 39696

CAIRO 1865

1. IN AN EFFORT BE RESPONSIVE TO STATE REFTEL AND AGAINST OUR BETTER JUDGMENT, AMBASSADOR TOLD FONMIN FAHMY ABOUT DR. GEMMA'S TALK WITH EGYPTIAN HEALTH OFFICIALS AND LATTERS' INTEREST IN ATTENDING REFERENCE CONFERENCE. AMBASSADOR ASSURED FAHMY THAT ALTHOUGH NATO-SOPNSORED, EMS IS NON-POLITICAL. (HE DID NOT MENTION THAT VARIOUS EE COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN INVITED SINCE GOE WOULD TAKE IT AMISS TO BE CLASSIFIED IN THAT CATEGORY.) IN LIGHT FOREGOING, AMBASSADOR ASKED IF FAHMY HAD ANY OBJECTION IF AN INVATION WERE EXTENED TO MOH TO PARTICIPATE.

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2. RESULTS WERE PREDICTABLE. FAHMY HAD OBJECTIONS.

GOE MINISTRIES, HE REITERATED, CANNOT FOR POLITICAL REASONS SEND DELEGATIONS TO NATO, CENTO OR SEATO-SPONSORED MEETINGS OF ANY KIND.

3. FAHMY WAS PIQUED THAT GEMMA HAD RAISED SUBJECT WITH MOH OFFICIALS AND TAXED AMBASSADOR FOR HAVING ALLOWED THIS WITHOUT FIRST CHECKING WITH HIM. AMBASSADOR TOLD FAHMY NEITHER HE NOR EMBASSY WERE AWARE OF GEMMA'S PERTINENT APPROACH TO MOH OFFICIALS: FAHMY COULD BE ASSURED, HOWEVER, THAT GEMMA HAD ACTED IN A WELL INTENTIONED EFFORT TO BE HELPFUL. FAHMY HAS ALSO SENT A LETTER TO MINISTER OF HEALTH RAPPING HIS KNUCKLES FOR PERMITTING MOH OFFICIALS TO ENCOURAGE INVITATION TO A NATO-SPONSORED MEETING.

4. COMMENT: ABOVE REACTION COMES AS NO SURPRISE. RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY, GOE IS SENSITIVE TO POSSIBLE POLITICAL CHARGES, HOWEVER FARFETCHED, THAT IT MIGHT BE ASSOCIATING ITSELF WITH NATO BY THE BACKDOOR OF TECHNICAL MEETINGS. INCIDENT HAS RESULTED IN SOME EMBARRASSMENT TO EGYPTIAN MOH AND RUFFLED FAHMY'S FEATHERS, BUT BOTH WILL GET OVER IT. TRUST WE, TOO, HAVE LEARNED SOMETHING FROM INCIDENT, VIZ, HOWEVER WELL-INTENTIONED, VISITING OFFICIALS FROM OTHER USG AGENCIES SHOULD CONSULT WITH EMBASSY BEFORE DISCUSSING EGYPTIAN PARTICIPATION IN NATO OR SIMILARLY SPONSORED CONFERENCES EVEN WHEN THESE ARE OF A TECHNICAL RATHER THAN POLITICAL NATURE.
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